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A

SERMON OF SLAVERY,

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BY

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SERMON OF SLAVERY.

“Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness?” — *Rom.* vi. 16.

IN our version of the New Testament the word *servant* often stands for a word in the original, which means *slave*. Such is the case in this passage just read, and the *sense* of the whole verse is this: — “If a man yields unconditional service to Sin, he is the *slave* of Sin, and gets Death for his reward.” Here, however, by a curious figure of speech, not uncommon in this Apostle, he uses the word *slave* in a good sense — *slave of Obedience* UNTO *Righteousness*. I now ask your attention to A SHORT SERMON OF SLAVERY.

A popular definition has sometimes been given of common bodily slavery, that it is the *holding of property in man*. In a kindred language it is called *Body-property*. In this case, a man’s body becomes the possession, property, chattel, tool, or thing of another person, and not of the man who lives in it. This foreign person, of course, makes use of it to serve his own ends without regard to the true welfare, or even the wishes of the man who lives in that body, and to whom it rightfully belongs. Here the relation is necessarily that of FORCE on one side and SUFFERING on the other, though the Force is often modi-

fied and the Suffering sometimes disguised or kept out of sight.

Now man was made to *be free*, to govern himself, to be his own master, to have no cause stand between him and God, which shall curtail his birthright of freedom. He is never in his proper element until he attains this condition of Freedom ; of self-government. Of course, while we are children, not having reached the age of discretion, we must be under the authority of our parents and guardians, teachers and friends. This is a natural relation. There is no slavery in it ; no degradation. The Parents, exercising rightful authority over their children, do not represent *human Caprice*, but *divine Wisdom and Love*. They assume the direction of the child's actions, not to do *themselves* a service, but to benefit *him*. The father restrains his child, that the child may have more freedom, not less. Here the relation is not of Force and Suffering, but of Love on both sides ; of *Ability*, which loves to help, and *Necessity*, which loves to be directed. The child that is nurtured by its parent gains more than the parent does. So is it the duty of the Wise, the Good, the Holy, to teach, direct, restrain the Foolish, the Wicked, the Ungodly. If a man is wiser, better, and holier than I am, it is my duty, my privilege, my exaltation to obey him. For him to direct me in Wisdom and Love, not for his sake but for my own, is for me to be free. He may gain nothing by this, but I gain much.

As slavery was defined to be *holding property in man*, so Freedom may be defined as *a state in which the man does, of his own consent, the best things he is*

capable of doing at that stage of his growth. Now there are two sorts of obstacles which prevent, or may prevent, men from attaining to this enviable condition of *Freedom*. These are:—

I. *Obstacles external to ourselves, which restrict our freedom, and*

II. *Obstacles internal to ourselves, which restrict our freedom.*

A few words may be said on the condition to which men are brought by each of these classes of objects.

I. *Of the Slavery which arises from a cause external to ourselves.* By the blessing of Providence, seconding the efforts, prayers, tears of some good men, there is no bodily, personal slavery sanctioned by the Law amongst us in New England. But at the South we all know, that some millions of our fellow citizens are held in bondage; that men, women, and children are bought and sold in the shambles of the national capital; are owned as cattle; reared as cattle; beaten as cattle. We all know that our Fathers fought through the war of Independence with these maxims in their mouths and blazoned on their banners: *that all men are born free and equal, and that the GOD OF ETERNAL JUSTICE will at last avenge the cause of the Oppressed, however strong the Oppressor may be*; yet it is just as well known that the sons of those very fathers now trade in human flesh, separating parent and child and husband and wife, for the sake of a little gain; that the sons of those fathers eat bread not in the sweat of their own brow, but in that of the slave's face; that they are

sustained, educated, rendered rich, and haughty, and luxurious by the labor they extort from men whom they have *stolen*, or *purchased* from the stealer, or *inherited* from the purchaser. It is known to you all, that there are some millions of these forlorn children of Adam, men whom the Declaration of Independence declares "born free and equal" with their master before God and the Law; men whom the Bible names "of the same blood" with the Prophets and Apostles; men "for whom Christ died," and who are "statues of God in ebony" — that they are held in this condition and made to feel the full burthen of a corrupt society, and doomed from their birth to degradation and infamy, their very name a mock-word; their life a *retreat*, not a progress, — for the general and natural effect of slavery is to lessen the qualities of a man in the slave as he increases in stature or in years, — their children, their wives, their own bones and sinews at the mercy of a master! That these things are so, is known to all of us; well known from our childhood.

Every man who has ever thought at all on any subject, and has at the same time a particle of manhood in him, knows that this state of slavery would be to him worse than a thousand deaths; that set *death* in one scale, and hopeless *slavery* for himself and children in the other, he would not hesitate in his choice, but would say, "Give me Death, though the life be ground out of me with the most exquisite tortures of lingering agony that malice can invent or tyranny inflict." To the African thus made the victim of American cupidity and crime, the state of

slavery, it will be said, may not appear so degrading as to you and me, for he has never before been civilized, and though the untaught instinct of a man bid him love freedom, yet Christianity has not revealed to him the truth, that *all men are brothers before God, born with equal rights*. But this fact is no excuse or extenuation of our crime. Who would justify a knave in plundering a little girl out of a fortune that she inherited, on the ground that she was a little girl "of tender years," and had never enjoyed or even beheld her birthright? The fact, that the injured party was ignorant and weak, would only enhance and aggravate the offence, adding new baseness and the suspicion of cowardice to guilt. If the African be so low, that the condition of slavery is tolerable in his eyes, and he can dance in his chains—happy in the absence of the whip—it is all the more a sin, in the cultivated and the strong, in the Christian (!) to tyrannize over the feeble and defenceless. Men at the South with the Bible in one hand—with the Declaration of Independence in the other hand—with the words of Jesus, "Love your Neighbor as yourself," pealing upon them from all quarters, attempt to JUSTIFY Slavery; not to *excuse*, to *cloak* or *conceal* the thing, but to *vindicate* and defend it. This attempt, when made by reflecting men in their cool moments, discovers a greater degree of blackness of heart than the kidnapping of men itself. It is premeditated wickedness grown conscious of itself. The plain truth of the matter is this:—*Men who wish for wealth and luxury, but hate the toil and sweat, which are their natural price, brought the African to*

America; they make his chains; they live by his tears; they dance to the piping of his groans; they fatten on his sweat and are pampered by his blood. If these men *spoke* as plainly as they must needs *think*, they would say openly; “our Sin captured these men on the African sands; our Sin fettered them in Slavery; and please God, our Sin shall keep them in Slavery till the world ends.” This has been *thought* long enough, it is high time it was *said* also, that we may know what we are about and where we stand.

Men at the North, sometimes, attempt to gloss the matter over, and hush it up by saying the least possible on the subject. They tell us that some masters are “excellent Christians,” — no doubt it is so, estimating these masters by the common run of Christians, — you find such on the deck of pirate ships; in the dens of Robbers. But suppose some slaveholders are as good Christians as Fenelon, or St. Peter; still a sin is Sin, though a Christian commit it. Our Fathers did not think “taxation without representation” any the less an evil because imposed by “his *most Christian* majesty,” a King of Christians.

Then too, it is said, “the slaves are very happy, and it is a great pity to disturb them,” that “the whole mass are better fed, and clothed, and are troubled with fewer cares than working men at the North.” Suppose this true also, what then? Do you estimate your welfare in pounds of beef; in yards of cloth; in exemption from the cares of a man! If so all appeal to *you* is vain, your own soul has become servile. The Saviour of the world was worse fed

and clothed, no doubt, than many a Georgian Slave, and had not where to lay his head, wearied with many cares ; but has your Christianity taught you that was an evil, and the slave's lutch at night, and pottage by day, and exemption from a man's cares by night and day are a good, a good to be weighed against freedom ! Then are you unworthy the soil you stand on ; you contaminate the air of New England, which free men died to transmit to their children free !

Still further it is said, "the sufferings of slaves are often exaggerated." This may be true. No doubt there have been exaggerations of particular cases. Every slave owner is not a demon, not a base man. No doubt there are what are called good Christians, men that would be ornaments to a Christian Church, among slaveholders. But though there have been exaggerations in details, yet the awful sum of misery, unspeakable wretchedness, which hangs over two millions of slaves is such that eye hath not seen it ; nor ear heard it ; nor heart conceived of it. It were so if *all* their masters were Christians in character, in action, still retaining slaves. How much deeper and wilder must swell that wide weltering sea of human agony, when the masters are what we *know* so many are, hard-hearted and rapacious, insolent and brutal !

This attempt to gloss the matter over and veil the fact, comes from two classes of men.

1. Some make the attempt from *a real design to promote peace*. They see no way to abate this mischief ; they see "the folly and extravagance" of such as propose "dangerous measures," and therefore they

would have us say nothing about it. The writhing *patient* is very sick ; the *leech* more venturesome than skilful, and the friends fearful to try the remedy, unwilling to summon wiser advice, declare the sick man is well as ever if you will only let him alone ! These men mourn that any one should hold another in bondage ; they think our fathers were illustrious heroes, for fighting dreadful wars with the parent country rather than pay a little tax against their will, but that this evil of slavery can never be healed ; therefore in the benevolence of their heart, they refuse to believe all the stories of suffering that reach their ears. The imagination of a kind man recoils at the thought of so much wretchedness, still more, if convinced that it cannot be abated. Now these men are governed by the best of motives, but it does not follow that their opinions are so just as their motives are good.

2. But there are others, who are *willing to countenance the sin and continue it, well knowing that it is a sin*. They would not have it abated. They tell you of the stupidity of the African ; that he is made for nothing but a slave ; is allied to the baboon and the ape, and is as much in his place when fettered, ignorant and savage, in a rice field, to toil under a taskmaster's whip, as a New Englander, free and educated, is in his place, when felling forests, planning railroads, or "conducting" a Steam Engine. Hard treatment and poor fare, say they, are the Black man's due. Besides, they add, there is a natural antipathy between the black race and the white, which only the love of money, or the love of power, on the

part of the white is capable of overcoming ; that the blacks are an inferior race, and therefore the white Saxons are justified in making them slaves. They think the strong have a *right* to the services of the weak, forgetting that the rule of Reason, the rule of Christianity is just the other way ; “ We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.” They would have us follow the old rule, “ that they should *get* who have the power, and they should *keep* who can.” Of this class nothing further need be said save this : that they are very numerous and quote the New-Testament in support of slavery, thus contriving to pass for Christians, and have made such a stir in the land that it is scarce safe to open one’s mouth and strip the veil from off this sin.

If some one should come and tell us that a new race of men had been discovered living at the bottom of the sea, who had a government which declared that all men were “ born free,” and a Religion which laid down these excellent maxims : that all men were brothers ; that God was no respecter of persons, and that man’s chief earthly duty was to love and serve his fellow mortals, keeping the law God Himself had made for man, we should say ; what an admirable government ! what a beautiful Religion ! what a free, religious, and blessed people they must be. “ Happy is the people that is in such a case. Yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord.” But if we were told that a part of that nation had seized certain men weaker than themselves, whom their government had declared “ free,” whom their Religion called “ Brothers ” to the best of men, that they held these

men in bondage, making them do all their master's work, and receive no recompense, but a wretched life which they were to transmit to their children, and that in the mean time the other part of the nation looked on, and said nothing against this shameful wrong; that they encouraged the crime and lent their wisdom, their wealth, and their valor to support and perpetuate this infamous institution, what should we say? Certainly that these men were Liars! Liars before their government! Liars before their God! Such is the fact. This people does not live at the bottom of the sea, but on the firm land, and boasts the name of Republic, and Christian Commonwealth!

The opinion of good and religious men here amongst us seems to be, that slavery is a great Sin and ought to be abolished as soon as possible; that the talent and piety of the nation cannot be better employed than in devising the speediest and most effectual way of exterminating the evil. Such of them as see a way to abolish the wrong cry aloud and publish the tidings; others who see no way state that fact also, not failing to express their dread of all violent measures. Such is the conviction of *good and religious men* at the North. But there is another opinion a little different, which is held by a different class of men at the North; — they think that *slavery is a great sin, and ought to be kept up so long as men can make money by it*. But if the suppression of slavery could be effected, — not as our fathers won their freedom, by blood and war, — so gently as not to ruffle a sleeping baby's eyelid, yet if it diminished the crop of rice,

or cotton, or tobacco, or corn, a single quintal a year, it would be a great mistake to free, cultivate, Christianize, and bless these millions of men! No one, I take it, will doubt this is a quite common opinion here in New England. The cause of this opinion will presently be touched upon. To show what baseness was implied in holding such opinions, would be simply a waste of time.

We all know there is at the North a small body of men, called by various names, and treated with various marks of disrespect, who are zealously striving to procure the liberation of slaves, in a peaceable and quiet way. They are willing to make any sacrifice for this end. They start from the maxim, that Slavery is Sin, and that sin is to be abandoned at once, and forever, come what will come of it. These men, it is said, are sometimes extravagant in their speech; they do not treat the "patriarchal institution" with becoming reverence; they call slaveholders hard names, and appeal to all who have a heart in their bosoms, and to some who *find* none there, to join them and end the patriarchal institution by wise and Christian measures. What wonder is it that these men sometimes grow warm in their arguments? What wonder that their heart burns when they think of so many women exposed to contamination and nameless abuse; of so many children reared like beasts, and sold as oxen; of so many men owning no property in their hands, or their feet, their hearts, or their lives! The wonder is all the other side, that they do not go to further extremities, sinful

as it might be, and like St. John in his youth, pray *for fire to come down from Heaven and burn up the sinners*, or like Paul, when he had not the excuse of youthful blood, *ask God to curse them*. Yet they do none of these things; never think of an appeal to the strong arm, but the Christian heart. When a man in this land of ours, begins to feel this desperate iniquity and sees the deadness of those around him; the silly game played over his head by political parties and political leaders; the game yet sillier played by theological parties and theological leaders, while the land lies overgrown with "trespasses and sins," he may be pardoned if he shrieks over human sufferings and human crime; if he cries out and spares not, but wishes he had a mouth in his hands, and a mouth in his feet, and was Speech all over, that he might protest in every limb against this abomination which maketh the heart desolate. There is no doubt that these men are sometimes *extravagant*! There need be no wonder at that fact. The best of men have their infirmities, but if this extravagance be one of them, what shall we call the deadness of so many more amongst us? An infirmity? What shall we say of the sin itself? An infirmity also? Honest souls engaged in a good work, fired with a great idea, sometimes forget the settled decorum of Speech, commonly observed in Forum and Pulpit, and call sin SIN. If the New Testament tell truth, Paul did so, and it was thought he would "turn the world upside down," while he was only striving to set it right. John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth did the same thing, and though one left his head in a charger, and the

other his body on a cross, yet the world thinks at this day they did God's great work with their sincerity of speech.

The men who move in this matter encounter opposition from two classes of men; from the *moderate*, who do not see the wisdom of their measures, and who fear that the slave if set free will be worse off than before, or who think that the welfare of the masters is not sufficiently cared for. These moderate men think "we had better not meddle with the matter at present," but by and by, at a convenient season, they will venture to look into it. Now these moderate men it is not likely would ever think of doing the work until it is all done, yet deserve the gratitude of the public; of the more enthusiastic Abolitionists. A balance wheel is useful to a machine; though it renders more force necessary at first to start the machine, it gives it stability and power when once set a moving. In certain stages of vegetation a chilly day is a most auspicious event.

Then too they encounter opposition from the *selfish*, who see, or think they see, that the white masters will lose some thousands of millions of dollars, if slavery be abolished! Who has forgotten the men that opposed the introduction of Christianity at Ephesus, — the craftsmen that made silver shrines for Diana!

I know some men say, "we have nothing to do with it. Slavery is the affair of the slave-owners and the slaves, not yours and mine. Let them abate it when they will." A most unchristian saying is this.

Slavery ! we have something to do with it. The sugar and rice we eat, the cotton we wear, are the work of the slave. His wrongs are imported to us in these things. We eat his flesh and drink his blood. I need not speak of our *political* connection with slavery. You all know what that is, and its effect on us *here*. But socially, individually, we are brought into contact with it every day. If there is a crime in the land known to us, and we do not protest against it to the extent of our ability, we are partners of that crime. It is not many years since it was said, temperate men had nothing to do with the sin of drunkenness ; though they paid for it out of their purse ! When they looked they found they had much to do with it, and sought to end it. I have no doubt, to go back to the Hebrew mythical tale, that when God called Cain, “ Where is Abel ? ” he said, “ I have nothing to do with it ; that is Abel’s affair. Am I my brother’s keeper ? ” If the Law of Moses made it the duty of a Hebrew to lift up the beast of a public enemy which had stumbled in the street, how much more does the Law of God make it a Christian’s duty to tell his brother of his sin, and help him out of it ; how much more to rescue the oppressed, — “ to bind up the broken-hearted ; to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound ? ”

Such then is slavery at the South ; such the action of men at the North to attack or to defend it. But look a moment at the *cause* of this sin, and of its defence. It comes from the desire to get gain, comfort,

or luxury; to have power over matter, without working or paying the honest price of that gain, comfort, luxury, and power; it is the spirit which would knowingly and of set purpose injure another for the sake of gaining some benefit to yourself. Such a spirit would hold slaves everywhere, if it were possible. Now when the question is put to any fair man, — Is not this spirit active at the North as well as the South? there is but one answer. The man who would use his fellow man as a tool merely, and injure him by that use; who would force another in any way to bend to his caprice; who would take advantage of his ignorance, his credulity, his superstition, or his poverty, to enrich and comfort himself; in a word, who would use his neighbor to his neighbor's hurt, — that man has the spirit of slaveholding, and were circumstances but different, he would chain his brethren with iron bonds. If you, for your own sake, would unjustly put any man in a position which degrades him in your eyes, in his own eyes, in the eyes of his fellow men, you have the spirit of the slaveholder. There is much of this spirit with us still. This is the reason that slavery finds so many supporters amongst us; that we deliver up the fugitives, and “bewray him that wandereth,” sheltering ourselves under the plea, that we keep the law of the land, written by man on parchment, half a century ago, while we violate the Law of Nature, written everlastingly by God on the walls of the world. It was through this spirit, — so genial to our Anglo Saxon blood, — that our fathers slew the Indians who would *not* work, and the Southern planter enslaves the Af-

rican, who *will* work. Both acted from the same motives, at North and South; killing or enslaving. That spirit is still with *us*, and shows itself in many shapes that need not be touched on now. It is not owing so much to our superior goodness perhaps, as to a fortunate accident, that we have no slaves here at this day. *They are not profitable.* The shrewd men of our land discerned the fact long ago, and settled the question. Doubtless we have still social institutions which eyes more Christian than ours shall one day look upon as evils, only less than that of slavery itself. But it is gradually that we gain light; he that converts it to Life as fast as it comes, does well.

II. Let a word be said on the other kind of slavery; *that which comes from a cause internal to ourselves.* This is common at the North, and South, and East, and West. In this case the man is prevented from doing what is best for him, not by some other man who has bound him, but by some *passion* or *prejudice*, *superstition* or *sin*. Here the mischief is in his own heart. If you look around you, you find many that bear the mark of the beast; branded on the forehead and the right hand; branded as slaves. "He that committeth sin is the slave of sin." The *avaricious* man is a slave. He cannot think a thought but as his master bids. He cannot see a truth, if a dollar intervene. He cannot relieve the poor, nor sympathize with the distressed, nor yield to the humane impulse of his natural heart. If he sees in the newspaper a sentence on the wastefulness or the

idleness of the poor, he remembers it forever ; but a word in the Bible to encourage charity, — he never finds that.

The *passionate* man is a slave ; he lies at the mercy of the accidents of a day. If his affairs go well, he is calm and peaceful ; but if some little mistake arise, he is filled with confusion, and the demon that rules him draws the chain. This master has many a slave under his yoke. He is more cruel than any planter in Cuba or Trinidad. He not only separates friend from friend, parent from child, and husband from wife, but what is worse yet, prevents their loving one another while they are together. This makes man a tyrant, not a husband ; woman a fiend, not an angel, as God made her to be. This renders marriage a necessary evil, and housekeeping a perpetual curse, for it takes the little trifles which happen everywhere, except between angels, and makes them very great matters ; it converts mistakes into faults ; accidents into vices ; errors into crimes ; and so rends asunder the peace of families, and in a single twelvemonth disturbs more marriages than all the shaveholders of Carolina in a century.

So the *peevish* man is a slave. His ill humor watches him like a demon. Oft-times it casteth him into the fire, and often into the water. In the morning he complains that his caprice is not complied with ; in the evening that it is. He is never peaceful, except when angry ; never quiet, but in a storm. He is free to do nothing good ; so he acts badly, thinks badly, feels badly, — three attributes of a Devil. A yoke of iron and fetters of brass were grievous to

bear, no doubt; the whip of a task-master makes wounds in the flesh; but God save us from the tyranny of the peevish, both what they inflict and what they suffer.

The *intemperate* man also is a slave; one most totally subjugated. His vice exposes him to the contempt and insult of base men, as well as to the pity of the good. Not only this, but his master strips him of his understanding; takes away his common sense, conscience, his Reason, Religion,—qualities that make a man differ from a beast; on his garments, his face, his wife, and child, is written in great staring letters, so that he may read that runs—*This man also has sold his birthright and become a slave.* The jealous planter forbids his slave to learn; but he cannot take from him the understanding he has got. This refinement of torture it was left for Intemperance to exercise, levelling at once the distinctions between rude and polished.

Bodily slavery is one of the greatest wrongs that man can inflict on man; an evil not to be measured by the external and visible woe which it entails on the victim, but by the deep internal ruin which it is its direct tendency to produce. If I had the tongue of the Archangel I could not give utterance to the awfulness of this evil. There is no danger that this be exaggerated,—no more than that the Sun in a picture be painted too bright. A wise man would do anything within the compass of righteousness, or suffer a hundred deaths, if that were possible, rather than yield himself a slave, to be the tool and chattel

of a master, who views him as a Dog. A religious man will do all within the compass of religion, to rescue others from a fate so hard. What we can do for this, then, let us do with faith in Him who brings good out of evil. You and I cannot move multitudes of men, but we can each move *one*, and so contribute our mite to remove the outward obstacles that oppose the freedom of man.

I know men say that you and I ought not to move in this matter; that we have nothing to do with it. They urge in argument that the Constitution of the United States is the *Supreme Law* of the land, and that sanctions slavery. But it is the *supreme* law made by the voters, like the statutes denouncing capital punishment. What voters have made can voters unmake. There is no Supreme Law but that made by God; if our laws contradict that, the sooner they end, or the sooner they are broken, why, the better. It seems to be thought a very great thing to run counter to a *law of man*, written on parchment; a very little thing to run counter to *the Law of Almighty God*, Judge of the quick and the dead. Has He sanctioned slavery? "Oh yes," say some, and cite Old Testament and New Testament in proof thereof. It has been said, "The Devil can quote Scripture for his purpose." We need not settle *that* question now, but it is certain that *men* can quote it to support Despotism when that is the order of the day, — or Freedom when that is the "law of the land;" certain that men defend Drunkenness and War, or Sobriety and Peace out of its pages. A man finds what he looks for. Now some tell us that Paul said, "Let

every soul be subject unto the higher powers," meaning the "law of the land," — "for *the powers that be are ordained of God.*" Did Paul *do* so? Not at all; he resisted the very *religion* established by the *powers that were*. But it will be said, he did not war directly with slavery, yet lived in the midst of slaveholders. Paul had work enough to do, no doubt, without that of abolishing slavery; perhaps he had not his eyes open to this great sin, — not seeing it as a *sin*. This is certain, that he thought the world was to end in his own lifetime, and therefore if he did see the wickedness of the "institution," he may have thought it not worth while to attempt to remove what would so soon perish, at the "coming of the Lord." But it is said still further, Jesus himself did not forbid slavery in set speech. Did he forbid by name any one of a hundred other vices that might be mentioned? He did not forbid the excessive use of intoxicating liquors in that way. Nay, we are told, in the fourth gospel, that he made three or four barrels of wine, — of superior quality too, — for a single wedding in a little country town, in Cana of Galilee! Does his silence or his alleged action afford any excuse for that sin also? It is a very sad state of mind in which a man can forget all the principles which Jesus laid down, all the spirit of his doctrine and his life, and then quibble about this, — that he did not forbid slavery in words! Men that cite *him* in defence of slavery, seem to forget the "Sermon on the Mount;" yes, all of his teachings, and would do well to read for their *special* edification, what is said to their prototypes in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, and elsewhere.

Bodily slavery, though established by the powers that be, is completely in the hands of the voters, for they are the powers that be; is no more sanctioned by the SUPREME law of the land, than Stealing or Murder. No enactment of man can make that *right* which was *wrong* before. It can never be abstractly right in any circumstances, to do what is abstractly wrong.

But that other slavery, which comes from yourself, that is wholly within *your* power. And which, think you, is the worse, to be unwillingly the slave of a man and chained and whipped, or to be the voluntary slave of Avarice, Passion, Peevishness, Intemperance! It is better that your body be forcibly constrained, bought and sold, than that your soul, yourself, be held in thralldom. The spirit of a Slave may be pure as an angel's; sometimes as lofty and as blessed too. The comforts of Religion, when the heart once welcomes them, are as beautiful in a slave's cabin, as in a king's court. When Death shakes off the slave's body, the chain falls with it, and the man, disenthralled at last, goes where the wicked cease from troubling, where the weary are at rest, where the slave is free from his master; yes, where faithful use of the smallest talent, and humblest opportunity has its reward, and unmerited suffering finds its ample recompense. But the voluntary slavery under Sin—it has no bright side. None in life; in death no more. You may flee from a task-master; not from yourself.

Body-slavery is so bad, that the sun might be pardoned if it turned back, refusing to shine on such a

sin ; on a land contaminated with its stain. But *Soul*-slavery, what shall we say of that ! Our fathers bought *political* freedom at a great price ; they sailed the sea in storms ; they dwelt here aliens on a hostile soil, the world's outcasts ; in cold and hunger, in toil and want they dwelt here ; they fought desperate wars in freedom's name ! Yet they bought it cheap. You and I were base men, if we would not give much more than they paid sooner than lose the inheritance.

But freedom for the soul *to act right, think right, feel right*, you cannot inherit ; that you must win for yourself. Yet it is offered you at no great price. You may take it who will. It is the birthright of you and me and each of us ; if we keep its conditions it is ours. Yet it is only to be had by the *religious* man — the man true to the nature God gave him. Without His Spirit in your heart you have no freedom. Resist His Law, revealed in Nature, in the later scripture of the Bible, in your own soul ; resist it by sin, you are a slave, you must be a slave. Obey that Law, you are Christ's freeman ; Nature and God on your side. How strange it would be that one man should be found on all the hills of New England, of soul so base, of spirit so dastardly, that of his own consent took on him the yoke of slavery ; went into the service of Sin ; toiled with that leprous host, in hopeless unrecompensed misery, without God, without Heaven, without Hope. Strange, indeed, that in this little village, there should be men who care not for the soul's freedom, but consent to live, no, to *die daily*, in the service of Sin.